

REMARKS

Claims 4-11 and 14-21 are of record.

The Office Action is responded to using the same Paragraph numbers.

2. The Examiner objects to the Specification as not having support for the claim term that the opening of one skin is spaced apart and offset from the openings of the opposing skin ventilation section. This embodiment and language is supported by claims 3 and 9 as originally filed. The Specification is amended at page 4, line 28 to incorporate this feature.

3.&4. Claims 7-10 and 14 are rejected as being indefinite. The Examiner suggests deleting the phrase "having at least one" from claim 7 Applicant has amended the claim in a slightly different form by referring to at least one ceiling panel.

4. The allowability of the subject matter of claims 7-10 and 14 is noted. Claim 7, from which claims 8-10 and 14 depend, has been written in independent form incorporating the amendment to claim 7 discussed above. Claims 9 and 14 of this group of allowable claims have been further amended to specify the panel in which the openings are located. Therefore, claims 7-10 and 14 should be allowable.

5.-7. Main claim 11 and its dependent claims 4-5 and 15-21 stand rejected over Gavin, et al., U.S. 4,843,788 in view of Schulz, U.S. 4,550,545. Claim 6 stands rejected over the combination of Gavin and Schulz and further in view of Melane, et al., U.S. 6,039,414.

Main claim 11 has been amended to incorporate the feature that the openings of each of the opposing ventilation sections are arranged in linear rows and columns to permit air to flow therethrough. This feature was set forth in claims 20 and 21, which claims have been canceled, and is disclosed at page 4, line 25 of the Specification. This arrangement permits a large volume of air flow and also provides security from viewing into the enclosure from various angles. Claim 11 is also amended to set forth that the ventilation opening is in a panel that is formed by spaced apart parallel skins that have an empty space therebetween.

The subject invention, as defined in claim 11, is directed to an enclosure or locker, that is to be used within an existing room to house various types of equipment. It is desired that the enclosure provide security but also be as inexpensive as possible to construct. Therefore, the walls of the enclosure do not have to be solid.

In contrast, the enclosure of Gavin is directed to a seclusion room, a room for violent patients having resilient inner walls, sometimes called a "rubber room".

The Examiner considers (Office Action page 4, lines 5-6) the claimed "openings" (which are now recited as being arranged in linear rows and columns) to be "the inherent recess that is filled by the ventilation section insert (13) that would bridge the inner and outer skins of the panel as depicted in Fig. 1 of Gavin.

In Gavin (Fig. 3), the space between the opposing skins is filled. In fact, it is questionable if Gavin has an inner skin for his panel since Fig. 3 shows a solid panel 20 whose inner surface is covered by a foam padding 21 (column 2, lines 47-48) that is itself covered by a seamless lining 22 (column 2, lines 57-60). Therefore, the Gavin structure does not at all correspond to the panel having the openings, as now set forth in claim 11, in opposing skins defining an empty space therebetween. Gavin does not at all teach or suggest a ventilation opening in a panel formed by opposing skins as is now set forth in claim 11.

The Examiner recognizes that Gavin does not teach or suggest the specific ventilation section of claim 11, and relies on Schulz. Schulz is directed to a room which is to be shielded from radio frequency energy. Applicant agrees with the Examiner that Schulz does show a panel with spaced apart skins 12 and 14. However, applicant does not agree that the spaced apart elongated vertical openings 12 and 15 correspond to the opposed sections having openings as set forth in claim 11, which are arranged in linear rows and columns that are in line with (claim 17) or are offset from (claim 18) each other. Both the in-line and offset arrangements of the openings provide good ventilation and also restrict viewing.

In Schulz, the elongated vertical openings 12 in the skin 11 are horizontally offset from the same shaped vertical openings 15 in the skin 14. There is no direct air flow communication between the elongated offset vertical openings 12 and 15. Air flow communication is provided

from one vertical opening 12 on one skin through a series of horizontal waveguide channels 13 to the opening 15 in the other skin 14. An opening such as 12 in one skin communicates to two openings 15 on the other wall through the ends of the channel waveguides 13 on both sides of the one opening 12.

Such an arrangement as shown in Schulz can hardly be said to correspond to the claimed openings in linear rows and columns in the opposed skin which form opposing ventilation sections in the panel.

The combination of Schulz with Gavin does not seem to be either logical or workable. That is, where on Gavin's solid wall would the horizontal channels 13 be placed and by what means would air flow be accomplished?

It is respectfully submitted that amended claim 11 sets forth a novel and advantageous structure that is not taught or suggested by the cited art. Therefore, claim 11 and its dependent claims 4-5 and 15-21 are patentable and should be allowed.

Claims 22 and 23 have been added to set forth the dimensions of the openings of the ventilation sections. Support for this subject matter is at page 6, line 13 of the Specification.

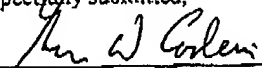
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Prompt and favorable action is requested.

Dated: February 12, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By



Gordon D. Coplein

Registration No.: 19,165

DARBY & DARBY P.C.

P.O. Box 5257

New York, New York 10150-5257

(212) 527-7700

(212) 753-6237 (Fax)

Attorneys/Agents For Applicant